**Embedding Talk in Rigorous Academics**

Planning for Implementation

*Academic Goals*

* What are the key concepts I want my students to learn in this lesson?
* What are the big ideas I want them to grapple with?
* How do these ideas related to what we’ve just done?

*Instructional Tasks*

* What kind of instructional task will support the accomplishment of those purposes?
* What kinds of tasks will provide points of entry and opportunities for engagement by all students?

*Plan All Aspects of Classroom Conversation*

* Clear introduction to the task
* Time for student activity
* Clear recap of the academic goal, the big ideas that have been discussed, and the new understandings that have been arrived at

*Choose Talk Format*

* Will this question or problem work best as a whole group discussion, as small group work, or as partner work?
* Should I set this topic up with a whole group discussion and then stop at a certain point and have the students turn and talk with partners?
* If so, precisely when should I tell them to do partner talk?
* If the group discussion after the partner talk turns out to be rich, will I still have enough time to do some kind of recap, pointing out the big ideas we’ve focused on?

*Planning Set Up and Enactment of Classroom Conversation*

* Is this question or problem rich enough to sustain an extended group discussion?
* What terms, words, or expressions are likely to create problems in my setting up of the task and making sure that everyone understands what to do?
* What are the likely ideas, theories, predictions, or conjectures the students will have in response to my question?
* What are the students likely to say in response to my question, and how will I respond?
* Is there more than one valid interpretation, answer, or position so that many different ideas can be put on the table for the group to consider?
* Will this question or problem work best as a whole group discussion or as small group work?
* Should I start off with the students working silently as individuals for a few minutes and then shift into partners or groups?

*Plan Conversation*

* Several solutions are likely to emerge. Which one should I ask a student to present to the group first?
* What kinds of every day language will they likely use and how will I link that to more academic terms?
* What will I do if only one solution or one interpretation is put forward?
* What will I do if only a few students want to talk?
* If the discussion is very rich, should I let it continue until the end of the period, or should I end it at a certain pre-set time so that I have time for a brief recap of the big ideas or the arguments we have built together?

*Lesson Planning*

* What are my academic goals and how will the task I have chosen move them forward?
* What are the advantages and limitations of the talk formats that I could use in this lesson?
* How can I best maximize the coherence of this lesson?